

Sirrah Lesson – 3

Beginning of Revelation

Before revelation started, the Prophet saws would seclude himself in the cave of Hira. The beginning was described by Umm al-Mu'mineen Aishah (r. anha) as: "The commencement of the Divine Inspiration to Allah's Messenger (saws) was in the form of good dreams which came true like bright daylight, and then the love of seclusion was bestowed upon him. He used to go in seclusion in the cave of Hira where he used to worship (Allah alone) continuously for many days before his desire to see his family. He used to take with him the journey food for the stay and then come back to (his wife) Khadija to take his food likewise again, till suddenly the Truth descended upon him while he was in the cave of Hira. The angel came to him and asked him to read. The Prophet (saws) replied, "I do not know how to read."

The Prophet (saws) added, "The angel caught me (forcefully) and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read and I replied, 'I do not know how to read.' Thereupon he caught me again and pressed me a second time till I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read but again I replied, 'I do not know how to read (or what shall I read)?' Thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said:

أَقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝

Then Allah's Messenger (saws) returned with the Inspiration and with his heart beating severely. Then he went to Khadija bint Khuwailid and said, "Cover me! Cover me!" They covered him till his fear was over and after that he told her everything that had happened and said, "I fear that something may happen to me."

Khadija replied, "Never! By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones."

Khadija then accompanied him to her cousin Waraqa bin Naufal bin Asad bin 'Abdul 'Uzza, who, during the pre-Islamic Period became a Christian and used to write the writing with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allah wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight. Khadija said to Waraqa, "Listen to the story of your nephew, O my cousin!" Waraqa asked, "O my nephew! What have you seen?" Allah's Messenger (saws) described whatever he had seen. Waraqa said, "This is *An-Namooos* (angel Gabriel) whom Allah had sent to Moses. I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would drive you out." Allah's Messenger (saws) asked, "Will they drive me out?" Waraqa replied in the affirmative and said, "Anyone (man) who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out then I would support you strongly." But after a few days Waraqa died and the Divine Inspiration was also paused for a while." (Sahih Bukhari – Book of Revelation, Hadith #3)

A closer Look:

- The good dream.
 - The first form of revelation
 - Maybe it was to prepare Him about what was to come latter, so that he wouldn't be terrified
 - Trained to receive revelation from Jibril while awake
 - Good dream is one of the 46 parts of Prophethood
 - "O people! Nothing remains from the glad tidings of prophethood except for the good dream: A Muslim may see it, or it can be seen from him" (Ibn Majah – Declared Sahih by al-Albani)
- Isolation became beloved to him (saws).
 - Reflecting on the purpose of life, contemplation of creation and Worshipping Allah
 - I'tiqaf as a form of Isolation

- Moderation in His actions
- When the truth came to him
 - Implications of this meeting for Mankind: The greatest moment moment on the history of tge earth!
 - Significance of the pen and knowledge: *“O You who believe! when You are told to make room In the assemblies, (spread out and) make room. Allâh will give You (ample) room (from his Mercy). And when You are told to rise up [for prayers, Jihâd, or for any other good deed], rise up. Allâh will exalt In degree those of You who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. and Allâh is Well-Acquainted with what You do.” (Al-Mujadilah, 58:11)*
Is one who is obedient to Allâh, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)? say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" it is Only men of understanding who will Remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allâh's signs and Verses). (Az-Zumar, 39:9)
- The Fatigue accompanying the Messenger (saws)
 - The weight of the revelation.
 - To teach to the Muslim Ummah that the religion they are blessed with came to them only after a process of stress, intensity and fatigue, i.e., only after great sacrifices

Different ways in which the Prophet (saws) would receive revelation

In Zaad al-Maad, Ibn Qayyim wrote the ways in which the Prophet saws would receive revelation:

- a) The true Dream. Prophet (saws) said: *“The dream of the Prophets are a form of Revelation”*
- b) Inspiration. The prophet (saws) said: *“Indeed Rooh al-Qudus (Jibril) blew into my heart that, verily, no person dies until he gets his full share of sustenance, and until his fixed term comes to an end. So fear Allah, and seek out (your sustenance) in a good and beautiful manner”* (Declared Sahih)
- c) Revelation would come like the ring of a bell. **Narrated 'Aisha:** Al-Harith bin Hisham asked Allah's Messenger (saws) "O Allah's Messenger (saws)! How is the Divine Inspiration revealed to you?" Allah's Messenger (saws) replied, *"Sometimes it is (revealed) like the ringing of a bell, this form is the hardest of all and then this state passes off after I have grasped what is inspired. Sometimes the Angel comes in the form of a man and talks to me and I grasp whatever he says."* 'Aisha added: Verily I saw the Prophet (saws) being inspired divinely on a very cold day and noticed the sweat dropping from his forehead (as the Inspiration was over).
- d) Revelation Inspired directly by Allah: The case of Mi'raj
- e) He (saws) would see Jibril in his original form: Shortly after he received revelation for the first time, and when he went in Miraj. Jibril had 600 wings.
- f) Jibril would come in the form of a man: Hadith of Jibril.

The Impact of Khadijah (r. anha) and her being a role model for our Muslimahs

- a) Her wisdom, understanding and strength of the heart (Hadith above)
- b) Role model for our women
- c) Hadith for her status: Abu Hurairah relates: *“Gabriel came to Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) and said: Allah's Messenger, lo. Khadija is coming to you with an Idaam (Food that is eaten with bread). When she comes to you, offer her Salam from her Lord, the Exalted and Glorious, and on my behalf, and give her glad tidings of a palace in paradise made of Qassab (hollowed out perals of gold); there will be no noise and no fatigue in that place.”* (Sahih Muslim)
- d) The Prophet (saws) says: *“The world is Mataa’ (anything from which pleasure can be derived), and the best Mataa’ is a righteous wife”* (Sahih Muslim)

The ceasing of Revelation for a While

Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani said: “The letting up of revelation means that it stopped coming down for a period of time. The reason why this happened was to allow enough time for the terror that had seized the Prophet (saws) to depart, and to make him long for the return of revelation” (Fathul Baree)

Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah Al-Ansari while talking about the period of pause in revelation reporting the speech of the Prophet (saws) *"While I was walking, all of a sudden I heard a voice from the sky. I looked up and saw the same angel who had visited me at the cave of Hira' sitting on a chair between the sky and the earth. I got afraid of him and came back home and said, 'Wrap me (in blankets).'* And then Allah revealed the following Holy Verses (of Quran):

يَتَأْتِيهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ ﴿١﴾ قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ ﴿٢﴾ وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ﴿٣﴾ وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ ﴿٤﴾ وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ ﴿٥﴾

'O you (i.e. Muhammad)! wrapped up in garments!' Arise and warn, and your Lord magnify, and your garments purify, and keep away from the idols(74.1-5) After this the revelation started coming strongly, frequently and regularly." (Sahih Bukhari)

The first Muslims:

- Khadijah bint Kuwailid: The first person, the first women in Islam, the first to hear the revelation, and the first to learn how to pray: Hadith of prayer, how Jibril would show to the Prophet saws, and him to Khadijah (r.anha)
- Ali ibn Abi Talib: 10 years according to majority, the first child in Islam, and the third person.
- Zaid ibn Harithah: The first freed slave, also known as Hibnun-Nabi. (Tell the story if time permits)
- Prophet's (saws) daughters: Zainab, Umm Kulthum, Fatimah and Ruqaiyyah all embraced Islam. The ideal Muslim family where Islamic duties were all applied fully.
- Abu Bakr: The first free man to embrace Islam (If time talk a bit about his pre-Islamic days). Prophet saws said about him: *"Every single person I invited to Islam stumbled, hesitated, and considered the matter, except for Abu Bakr. When I invited him, he neither wavered, nor hesitated"* His knowledge and standing among the Quraish. People who embraced Islam at his hands were: Uthman bin Affan, Abdur-Rahman bin Awf, Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas, Zubair bin Awwam, Talhah bin Ubaidullah (r.a).

The second wave of Converts included: Amin al-Ummah Abu Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah, Abu Salamah, Barrah bint Abdul Muttalib, Al-Arqam, Uthmaan bin Madhu'n, Sai'd ibn Zaid and his wife Fatimah bint Khattab, Asma bint Abu Bakr, Umm al-mu'mineen Aishah, Khabbab bin A'rat etc

Third wave (some): Abdullah bin Masood, Ayyash ibn Abi Rabi'ah, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib and his wife Asma, bint Umais, Ammar ibn Yasir and his family, Bilal ibn Rabah al-Habashi, Suhaib al-Rumi etc. The total number at the time was more than 40 according to the majority view.

Rejection of the view that the first converts were weak and were trying to protect themselves and improve their status: Only 13 of them were poor, freed slaves and foreigners, the rest were from the nobility of the Quraish. Prof. Saalih al-Shamee says: *"We do not want to deny the existence of Muslims who were poor and were slaves during the early days of Islam, but we do deny that they were the majority, for the established historical facts tell us otherwise. Had they been the majority, their efforts would have resulted in a class struggle – the poor and the weak pitted against the strong and rich. But thoughts of a class struggle were not on the minds of any Muslim. As a community they considered one another to be brothers, all slaves of Allah, regardless of whether they were rich or poor. Actually most of the Prophet's followers during the early days of Islam were from the upper echelons of the society, a fact that attests to the strength and power of the message they had accepted. In order to uphold their beliefs, they were willing to endure persecution and torture at the hands of their people, treatment they had never previously thought of, never mind experienced."*

The Prophet (saws) would organize Muslims into small groups where two poor people would remain in the company of a rich nobleman. He would share his food with them, and whoever among them had memorized something from the Qur'an, would teach it to the other members. People were joined into small groups to both strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and to establish group study sessions. One example was the group of Fatimah bint Khattab, her husband Sai'd bin Zaid, Nua'im ibn Abdullah, and their teacher Khabbab bin A'rat.

The house of Al-Arqam

The strategy of the Prophet (saws):

- a) Al-Arqam did not openly declare Islam
- b) He was from the clan of Banu Makhzoom, which had enmity towards Banu Hashim.
- c) Al-Arqam was approximately 16 when he became Muslim, so he was not from the "prominent" (in age and status) followers like Abu Bakr, making it highly improbable for the Quraish to even suspect that Muslims would meet in his house.

Some Qualities of the Early Companions

Some of them may be called specifically to them due to the circumstances, but many can be accessible by any human being who wishes to build them.

- a) Complete Submission to Revelation.
 - a. Their hearts being free from desires that contradicted with Islamic teachings
 - b. Direct interaction with the Qur'an, verses commenting on their behaviors, praising them or reproaching them, answering their questions etc.
 - c. Not the problem we face today to find the Authentic Knowledge because of the direct access to the Prophet saws.
 - d. The impact of the Character of the Prophet saws on them.
 - e. The subject of study: Qur'an
- b) A deep spiritual awakening that resulted from revelation. As they were called: "During the day they would be warriors of Dawah and Jihad, and during the night they would be worshiping Allah more assiduously than monks"
- c) In a verse of the Qur'an Allah swt says: ***"And keep yourself (O Muhammad) patiently with those who call on their Lord (i.e. Your companions who Remember their Lord with glorification, praising In prayers, etc., and other righteous deeds, etc.) morning and afternoon, seeking His face, and let not Your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world; and obey not Him whose heart we have made heedless of Our Remembrance, one who follows his own lusts and whose affair (deeds) has been lost."*** (Al-Kahf, 18:28)
 - a. Patience: ***And keep yourself (O Muhammad) patiently"***. One of the Qualities of those who are saved from Loss. Look at Suratul A'sr. Four Qualities are mentioned in it:
 - i. Belief in Allah
 - ii. Performing good deeds
 - iii. Recommend one another to the truth
 - iv. Recommend one another to Patience
 - 1. The four Fundamental Principles of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab
 - 2. Whoever does the first three, patience for him is a must due to the opposition.
 - b. Frequently Supplicating to Allah: ***"...those who call on their Lord morning and afternoon..."*** Dua is of three different kinds (Ibn Qayyim): "Dua is the essence of Ibadah"
 - i. Dua of glorification, SubhanAllah, Allahu Akbar etc.
 - ii. Dua of Dawah, Jihad, seeking knowledge etc. The dua of the limbs.
 - iii. Dua of asking something from Allah.
 - c. Sincerity: ***"seeking His face"***

- d. Steadfastness and firmness upon the truth: *“and let not Your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world”*. Allah says in the Qur’an: *“Among the believers are men who have been true to their Covenant with Allâh [i.e. they have gone out for Jihâd, and showed not their backs to the disbelievers], of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e. have been martyred), and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed [i.e. they never proved treacherous to their Covenant which they concluded with Allâh] In the least. (Al-Ahzaab 33:23)*. Faith, manliness and Steadfastness upon the truth. “Faith inspires one to hold on the high values and to make significant sacrifices for the sake of one’s principles and beliefs. Manliness induces one to go after one’s goals, without taking notice of trifling people and trifling matters. And truthfulness helps prevent the occurrence of degeneration in one’s character. If one has all of these three above-mentioned qualities, then it matters not if one sees the hangman’s rope, the shiny part of a sword’s blade perched over one’s neck, worldly profit, or an enticingly beautiful woman, for he will, by the permission of Allah, remain steadfast upon the truth”

Prophet’s (saws) Understanding of the Universal Laws

- Muslims must realize that success will not come to them in an arbitrary or random manner: It will only come to them when they learn how to live according to Allah’s Laws

Some of these laws are:

- Sound leadership
- Organized group work of Muslims to combat falsehood and establish justice
- Sound methodology of learning the correct beliefs
- Law of gradual Progression: One of the laws Muslims must adhere to when they are striving to build a strong and stable nation.
 - First phase: Muslims were trained by teaching them the correct Aqeedah (Hadith of A’ishah)
 - Second: they struggled against and confronted the enemies of Islam
 - Third: They subdued them and became victorious over them after a lot of sacrifices and hardships.
- The Sunnah of Change: Islam changed Beliefs, outlooks, social values, and Political Systems.